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ABSTRACT

The document lists and critically annotates 155 children's books about Africa published from 1958-1978 as part of an evaluation project of the collection in the public library in Madison, Wisconsin. Books include fiction, picture books, history, folklore, travel accounts, biography, and geography. Annotations indicate type of book, possible uses, topics covered, reasons for retention or deletion, emphases, problems such as lack of information, kind and quality of illustrations, and important insights. Grade level is given for some of the books. Using 14 evaluation criteria (which are not listed), the books are arranged by author and appear in three sections: recommended for retention in the collection, recommended for deletion, and a supplement of both types covering books published in 1976-1978. Reasons for deletion include datedness, biases, large information gaps, stereotypes, and generalizations. (CK)

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Children's Books On Africa

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This list is a result of the evaluation of part of the African collection in the children's section of the main Madison Public Library. It is divided into two sections--one a list of books to retain and the other a suggested list of books to weed out or put in the inactive archives. Although the list of books to retain includes many that are recommended by our Program, others are only comparatively better books that are not necessarily of very high quality. (A recommended list is available from the Program.) The criteria used by the Program for evaluating materials on Africa lists 14 factors and should accompany this list for better clarification of the basis for retaining some and weeding out others. Although most of these books were examined by the staff of the Program, for many others we have depended on the evaluations of the School Services Division of the African-American Institute, and on Nancy J. Schmidt's book Children's Books on Africa and Their Authors: An Annotated Bibliography. New York, Africana Publishing Co., 1975.

Astair Zekiros
Foreign Curriculum Consultant
May 1978

SUGGESTED LIST OF BOOKS TO RETAIN

Aardema, Verna. Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears. Dial Press. 1975.

--Caldecott Award book--an African tale.

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Adamson, Joy. Born Free: A Lioness of Two Worlds. Pantheon. 1960.
_____. Forever Free. Harcourt. 1962.

--Winning paperback accounts of feeding, raising and "freeing" lions in Kenya. The former has been made into a commercial movie.

Arkhurst, Joyce Cooper. The Adventures of Spider and More Adventures of Spider. Scholastic Book Services. 1972.

--Two folktale books plus a record. The stories are simply written and could be used in middle elementary either by the whole class or by the individual children to improve reading skills and to learn about Africa.

Baker, Richard St. Barbe. Kamiti. Sloan and Pearce. 1958.

--Written in the first person about a Kenyan man named Kamiti. The story involves much on the use, misuse and improvement of the environment. Good supplementary reading for learning about ecology.

Bawden, Nina. Three on the Run. Archway. 1968.

--A young African boy living in London is threatened by a kidnapper. Older elementary pupils should enjoy this short adventure novel.

Bernheim, Marc and Evelyne. From Bush to City--A Look at the New Africa. Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc. 1966.

--Deals with urban and rural ways of living, education, religion, art, economy; the role of women and nation building. Has problems of negatively loaded terminology, errors and outdatedness, but also has some good aspects. OK to keep on the library shelves once it is there, but is not recommended, as is the case with some of the books listed here for retaining.

Bernheim, Marc and Evelyne. The Drums Speak: The Story of Kofi, A Boy of West Africa. Harcourt Brace and Jovanovich. 1971.

--Very good pictures of African children in color bring to life the dilemmas Kofi faces as he has to leave his village for a distant school, and as he prepares himself for his initiation rites.

Bernheim, Marc and Evelyne. In Africa. Atheneum. 1974.

--Lots of pictures showing urban and rural life from different areas of the Continent. Good for having children describe what they see.

Bertol, Roland. Sundiata: An Epic of the Lion King. Crowell. 1970.

--A history book--the style and illustrations can make this 14th century leader come to life for upper elementary students.

Bleeker, Sonia. The Masai . William Morrow and Co. 1963.

--An anthropological study of the Masai.. A very good source for learning about the traditions and culture of an African ethnic group--although the last chapter on "The Masai Today" is outdated.

Bødker, Cecil. The Leopard. Atheneum. 1975.

--An interesting adventure story with a setting in Ethiopia although location is mentioned only on the book jacket. The interactions of the characters in the book can be understood by a young reader without going through a lot of cultural shock. Gives some insight into values related to such things as good manners, hospitality, and child-adult relationships that people in this area of the world have.

Bond, Jean Carey. A is for Africa. Franklin Watts. 1969.

--Gives short pieces of information on Africa using words starting with each letter in the alphabet. Illustrated with photographs.

Burchell, S.C. Building the Suez Canal. American Heritage Publishing Co., Inc. 1966.

--This is an excellent book on a narrow topic--a thorough-going coverage of the people and business involved in building the Suez Canal. It is profusely illustrated with excellent material and serves well as a reference and picture book.

Carpenter, Allan. Enchantment of Africa: Tunisia. Children's Press. 1973.

--Deals mainly with the post-independence (1956) period, but does give attention to ancient, mainly Carthage, period. This text focuses on all major themes; anthropology, architecture, geography, economy, politics and urbanization, but unfortunately very little is said about art in Tunisia and even less on literature although Tunisians stand out among the best of North African writers. A very well written, well-organized, informative book.

Chandler, Edna Walker. Will You Carry Me? Albert Whitman and Company. 1965.

--Nicely illustrated story of a Liberian boy who learns to carry his own load; it is spiced with visual and conversational tidbits which reflect life in that West African country. Fourth graders could probably read it themselves while younger children could learn from the pictures.

Christie, Trevor L. Legacy of a Pharoah. J.B. Lippincott. 1966.

--This book gives a survey of ancient Egyptian history and focuses on Ramses II of the 13th century B.C. and his building activities. The material deals mainly with how these relics were threatened by the need to enlarge the Aswan Dam and the measures taken by UNESCO to save them. Excellent source for teaching and learning about global interdependence. 120 member nations of UNESCO cooperate to save important Egyptian historical sites from being drowned and washed away by the waters of the Aswan Dam.

Chu, Daniel and E. Skinner. A Glorious Age in Africa. Doublday. 1965.

--Easy reading for middle school; describes ancient African kingdoms.

Clark, Leon E. Through African Eyes. Praeger. 1973.

--Six volumes of source readings:
1. Coming of Age in Africa: Continuity and Change
2. From Tribe to Town: Problems of Adjustment
3. African Past and the Coming of the Europeans
4. The Colonial Experience: An Inside View
5. The Rise of Nationalism: Freedom Regained
6. Nation-Building: Tanzania and the World

Coatsworth, Elizabeth. The Princess and the Lion. Pantheon. 1963.

--An adventure story which revolves around the historical fact that possible claimants to the Ethiopian throne were confined at Amba Wahni--a fortress prison, to avoid competition and bloodshed. Interesting reading and the author weaves into her story information on such topics as languages, wild animals, churches, climate, topography, Moslem-Christian frictions, birds, flowers, etc.

Copeland, Paul W. The Land and People of Libya. J. B. Lippincott. 1967.

--Deals with history, geography, religion, traditions, contemporary life styles, etc. Nothing given on music, art, architecture or literature. Well written book with interesting stories and facts.

Courlander, Harold. The Son of the Leopard. New York: Crown Publishers, Inc. 1974.

--A very interesting story book. The author weaves oral narratives and legends of Northern Ethiopians into his story.

Crane, Louise. Ms. Africa. J. B. Lippincott Co. 1973.

--Interesting reading on the lives of eleven African women from seven countries in West, East and Southern Africa. The narrative deals with their personal struggles as achievers and their contributions to their societies. Included are a judge, a one-time President of the United Nations, political activists, an engineer, a medical doctor, etc. The author touches on women's conditions and status of women in the various countries these women are from, thus making it clear that her book deals with women who are exceptions rather than the rule.

D'Amato, Janet and Alex. African Crafts for You to Make. Julian Messner, Division of Simon & Schuster. 1969.

--Book containing detailed instructions for making models of southern and central African houses, a variety of drums and stringed instruments, masks and headdresses, clothing, jewelry, a game, and other items; includes background on these arts and their societal context.

Davidson, Basil. A Guide to African History. Doubleday. 1971.

--Easy reading.

Dayrell, Elphinstone. Why the Sun and the Moon Live in the Sky. Houghton Mifflin Co. 1968.

--A Nigerian tale. Well illustrated.

Depree, Mildred. A Child's World of Stamps. Parents' Magazine Press. 1973.

--Deals with all parts of the world. Some 20 color pictures of stamps from nine African countries are included and are used for describing some aspects of the geography and cultures of Africa.

Dietz, Betty and Michael Olatunji. Musical Instruments of Africa. John Day. 1965 .

--Book and record. About $5.00 each. Detailed and fascinating. Deals with nature, use and place of musical instruments in the life of the peoples of Africa. Record shows how they sound.

Dobler, Lavinia and W. A. Brown. Great Rulers of the African Past. Doubleday and Co. 1965.

--Easy reading; biographical sketches of African leaders before the 19th century.

Doob, Leonard W., ed., A Crocodile Has Me By the Leg. Walker and Company. 1966.

--A book of African poems, with illustrations.

Elisofon, Eliot. Zaire: A Week in Joseph's World. Crowell-Collier Press. 1973.

--Deals with school activities, visit to a village, sports, pets, storytelling, etc. Illustrated with photographs.

Englebert, Victor. Camera on Ghana: The World of a Young Fisherman. Harcourt, 1971. Nice photosequences of fishing off the Ghana coast.

Feelings, Muriel L. Zamani Goes to Market. The Seabury Press. 1970.

--Interesting reading with good illustrations. Dwells on human commonalities of family love and efforts to please each other.

Feelings, Muriel. Moja Means One: A Swahili Counting Book. Dial Press. 1971.

--Numbers and their Swahili equivalents are placed alongside of objects to be counted. Some of the illustrations are complicated and younger pupils might need help picking out the items for counting.

Feelings, Tom. Black Pilgrimage. Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Co. 1972.

--The experiences of an African-American artist in the U.S. and in Ghana and his decision to settle in Africa. Useful for dealing with race relations in the U.S. and their effects on black people, links between Africans and African-Americans, African-American art, the role of the black artist in the U.S., etc. Easy reading and highly artistic illustrations.

Feelings, Muriel. Jambo Means Hello. The Dial Press. 1974.

--The alphabet letters stand for Swahili words which are explained (in English) and pronounced for children while the words are also illustrated in full page pictures.

Giovanni, Nikki. Ego-tripping and Other Poems for Young People. Lawrence Hill & Co. 1973.

--Inspiring poetry for children. Both the poetry and pictures should capture the imagination and feelings of children of all ages. Many will memorize selections because they will delight in both their forms and ideas. The African experience pervades this small but winning book.

Guirma, Frederic. Princess of the Full Moon. Macmillan Publishing Co. 1970.

--A West African tale. Well illustrated.

Haley, Gail. A Story A Story. Atheneum Press, 1970.

--A very well illustrated Ashanti folktale of how Anansi the spider earned the right to tell folk-tales. Movie version available.

Heady, Eleanor B. When the Stones Were Soft: East African Fireside Tales. Funk and Wagnalls. 1968.

--All of these seem suitable for reading to young children; older ones could read them by themselves. Most have a moral or describe why natural phenomena are as they are. The last story, "Men of Different Colors," is particularly fascinating because it offers another culture's view of how the world began.

Henderson, Larry. Egypt and the Sudan. Thomas Nelson, Inc. 1971.

--Deals with Egypt from ancient times to date of publication and the Sudan is treated beginning with the 19th century. The main emphasis is on political developments. A very understanding portrayal of the people of these two countries.

Kamm, Josephine. Explorers Into Africa. Crowell-Collier Press. 1970.

--Deals with explorers such as James Bruce, Mungo Park, Stanley, Livingstone etc. Has problems of negative terminology such as "savage" and "tribesmen"--but not too bad when compared to other books on reactions and interactions of European explorers in Africa.

Kerina, Jane. African Crafts. Lion Press. 1970.

--Book with detailed instructions for making fans, mats, plant dyes, jewelry, a ceremonial stool, a stringed instrument; includes directions for cloth dyeing, printing and wrapping. Also gives background and context for arts plus notes on names and design meanings.

Kimble, George M.T. and Ronald Steel. Tropical Africa Today. McGraw-Hill. 1966.

--An interesting survey of Africa. Explicitly tries to dispell misconceptions about the continent. The effects of geography on people are discussed. Both tradition and change are covered.

Korty, Carol. Plays from African Folktales. Charles Scribners Sons. 1969.

--Four interesting short plays. Includes ideas for acting, dance, costumes and music.

Leslau, Charlotte and Wolf. African Folk Tales, Peter Pauper Press. 1963.

--Short selections from all over the Continent; most of the stories have a moral.

Levy, Mimi C. Caravan from Timbuktu. The Viking Press. 1961.

--A story based on the pilgrimage of the Mansa of Mali to Mecca. The book recreates the atmosphere of Timbuktu. The journey to Mecca involves incidents of intrigue and suspense which make the book exciting to read.

Macaulay, David. Pyramid. Houghton Mifflin. 1975.

--Excellent work to use in teaching about the pyramids--why and how they were built. This work is cast in an imaginary real-life situation for the building of first one and then two pyramids. The author takes the reader step by step on the process of building a pyramid, from the inception of the idea in the mind of the pharaoh, to the formulation of a plan for the location, size, etc., right on down to the death of that imaginary pharoah and his placement in the structure. Very well done pen drawings illustrate each step of the process and these can be elaborated in many ways for class or individual projects. The material is very up-to-date, incorporating the most recent theories regarding the construction of the pyramids.

Mahmud, Haki Nagub. The Land and People of Egypt. J.B. Lippincott Co. 1965.

--A general survey of Egypt which covers all the relevant themes and concepts for learning about this particular country. Written from an informed Egyptian's point of view. Some portions, but not most, are outdated.

Manniche, Lise. How Djadja-em-Ankh Saved the Day: A Tale from Ancient Egypt. Thomas Y. Crowell Co. 1977.

--This story of Djadja-em-Ankh, the magician, takes place in Egypt about 4,500 years ago. The story was written down about 1000 years later and can be seen today on a papyrus scroll in a museum. This translation is also designed in the form of a scroll. Includes detailed information on books in ancient Egypt, papyrus making and hieroglyph writing.

Mellersh, M.E.L. Finding Out About Ancient Egypt. Lothrop, Lee & Shepart Co., Inc. 1963.

--Presents major aspects of life in ancient Egypt. A good book for school use. It covers a great deal of basics for understanding archeology as well as Egyptology. It has sarcasm in a vein which should appeal to the reader and also catch his/her interest. Easy to understand. The illustrations are excellent and well placed. Materials are presented in a topical manner within the chronological framework.

Moskin, Marietta D. Toto. Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, Inc. 1971.

--The story of an elephant, befriended by a child. Has some terminology problems and misleading statements.

Murphy, E. Jefferson. Understanding Africa. Thomas Y. Crowell. 1969.

--Basic text or reference.

Nagenda, Musa. Dogs of Fear. Holt, Rinehart & Winston. 1972.

--The story of Kabana, a thirteen-year old boy. Kabana goes to a school run by Europeans. His father, who first sent him there is later afraid that western education is making his son effeminate. To restore his father's respect Kabana has to prove himself by going after three wild dogs that killed some goats the boy was responsible for. This book has no particular content problem, but is not readable. Probably won't hold any young reader's attention long enough to finish the story.

Ojigbo, A. Okion. Young and Black in Africa. Random House. 1971. $1.50

--Eight extracts from the biographies of Africans, including an escaped slave, an African living in America, a woman writer, and others. Easy reading.

Payne, Elizabeth. The Pharoahs of Ancient Egypt. Random House. 1964.

--Not a book for beginners. Covers some 2,000 years in supposed detail. Does give general introductory information on Egyptology, e.g. how a dynasty list was formed. Presents general points of religious belief. Sketchy on social and economic factors. There is no attempt to distinguish the modern inhabitants of Egypt from the ancient ones. Not one of the best resources on ancient Egypt, but passable.

Perl, Lila. Ethiopia, Land of the Lion. William Morrow & Co. 1972.

--Well written, interesting book. It deals with all the major themes--geography, history, religions, holidays, education, economy, arts, communications, foreign relations, politics, languages, and urban and rural situations. The major emphasis is on the Amharas. A very good introductory book on Ethiopia although the contents have a few inaccuracies.

Phumla. Nomi and The Magic Fish: A Story from Africa. Doubleday. 1972.

--A "Cinderalla"-type story that would be fun to compare.

Pine, Tillie S. and Joseph Levine. The Africans Knew. McGraw-Hill. 1967.

--Book which describes aspects of ancient African technology and know-how, notes how these have been developed in modern times and follows with an activity children can engage in which demonstrates or relates to this knowledge. Some topics covered are bronze-working, pottery-making and irrigation.

Price, Christine. Talking Drums of Africa. Charles Scribner's Sons. 1973.

--On the popularity and the variety of types of drums and the different ways they are used. Well illustrated.

Riwkin-Brick, Anna and Vera Fonsberg. Gennet Lives in Ethiopia. Macmillan. 1967.

--When Gennet's brother is bitten by a snake she must run to a nearby village to get the doctor. The dialogue is simple and the pictures excellent.

Robinson, Charles A. The First Book of Ancient Egypt. Franklin Watts, Inc. 1961.

--Covers Egypt from about 3000 B.C. to 1000 B.C. in general fashion. Covers all major topics briefly--religion, trade, science, art, etc. Easy reading. Explanations are simple--sometimes oversimplified.

Rothkopf, Carol Zeman. The Opening of the Suez Canal. Franklin Watts, Inc. 1973.

--This book is confined, for the most part, to the events leading up to and during the opening of the Suez Canal. The geography of Egypt and the trade routes of the world are dealt with. This helps to bring out the vast importance of the Canal on the world scene.

Seed, Jenny. The Voice of the Great Elephant. Pantheon. 1968.

--About the great Zulu king and conqueror, Shaka, told in story form. This is a part of South African history usually missing in literature for the young and this book helps to fill that void. Has some shortcomings, but the good points outweigh the bad.

Serwadda, W. Moses. Songs and Stories from Uganda. Thomas Y. Crowell. 1974.

--Songs and stories in their cultural context; words are given (with music) in Luganda and English.

Spencer, William. The Land and People of Algeria. J.B. Lippincott Co. 1969.

--Covers Algeria from the Stone Age to date of publication. Primarily a simple political-type history--slights the economic and ignores the cultural/ artistic and religious aspects. Not among the best resources on Algeria, but passable.

Stein, Harry. Southern Africa. New York: Franklin Watts. 1975.

--A good introductory book on Angloa, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Republic of South Africa, Rhodesia, Swaziland and Zambia. This book deals with historical and contemporary situations, the origins of contemporary conflicts, the relations of world powers and southern Africa--especially the U.S. Raises questions which help readers to examine and clarify their own values in relation to events in the area.

Sutherland, Efua. Playtime in Africa. Atheneum. 1972.

--A variety of children's games with a large number of useful pictures.

Turnbull, Colin. The Peoples of Africa. The World Publishing Co. 1962.

--An anthropological survey of the peoples of Africa, their ways of life and their interactions with non-Africans. Has some shortcomings such as a poor chapter on religions and use of such terms as "Pygmy" "Bushmen" etc. But the good points outweigh the few shortcomings.

Turnbull, Colin M. Tradition and Change in African Tribal Life. The World Publishing Co. 1962.

--Although this book emphasises numerically small and unrepresentative groups, a very understanding portrayal of the people comes through. Helps to understand the ways of life, the values and the reasons behind the values of the Mbuti and the San people, who unfortunately, even this author refers to as "Pygmies" and "Bushmen."

Van Stockum, Hilda. Mogo's Flute. Viking Press. 1966.

--Enjoyable reading and good supplementary source for children learning about Kenya. Mogo is a little Kikuyu boy and through his story readers learn Kikuyu values, culture, family relations, religions, superstitions, physical living conditions, etc.

Wilson, Beth P. The Great Minu. Follett Publishing Co. 1974.

--An amusing Ghanaian tale. Illustrated in black and white.

SUGGESTED LIST OF BOOKS TO DISCARD

Allen, William D. Africa. The Fideler Co. 1966.

--A picture geography book. Discusses the peoples of North Africa, Europeans and other outsiders in Africa, crafts, farming, education and government. The pictures accurately depict various parts of Africa, but their captions are too brief to explain them. The result is an over-generalized view of Africa.

Arundel, Jocelyn. Simba of the White Mane. Mcgraw Hill. 1958.

--Adventure story about a Tanganyikan boy who illegally joins a safari and meets a fierce lion when he is alone. The emphasis is on large wild animals and safari activities. Negative about Africans who are portrayed as servants and porters.

Arundel, Jocelyn. Mighty Mo.--McGraw Hill. 1961.

--The story of an elephant in Tanganyika. Focuses on professional game hunting and wildlife. Negative about Africans and reinforces some common stereotypes.

Black, Colin. The Lands and Peoples of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. The MacMillan Co. 1961.

--A highly outdated survey of three East African countries--Rhodesia, Zambia and Malawi.

Bleeker, Sonia. The Tuaregs. Nomads and Warriors of the Sahara.

--Deals with early history, the family life of the Tuareg, their caravans and raids, religion and ceremonies, etc. Manifests ethnocentric and cultural biases in such statements as "The Arab merchants had no qualms about whether slavery was right or wrong since Moslems did not believe in equality among human beings." Islam teaches human equality in much a similar fashion as Christianity. Western Christians were more active and more brutal slave traders--and yet the author is not likely to make the same kind of sweeping statement about Christians. Another example of a cultural bias is seen in the description "the Koran, the Bible of the Moslems." The same author is not likely to describe the Bible as the Koran of the Christians." Should be described as "The Koran, the Holy Book of the Moslems." Last chapter on "The Tuareg Today "--Over three fourths of the material deals with 19th and early 20th century -- Some on pre-World War II period--very little on the Tuaregs of the 1950's or 60's.

Booth, Edna Rideout. Kalena. Longman, Green & Co. 1958.

--Story of a girl of the ex-Congo (Zaire). The story, like the author's later African story Kalena and Sana, has no overt condemnation of Africans and their lives as often happens in story books. But the social, economic and political situations reflected in the story have changed a great deal making this material out of date.

Booth, Edna Rideout. Kalena and Sana. David Mckay Co. 1962.

--Story of a couple in the ex-Congo (Zaire). Kalena's story from the above book is continued. Many factors related to the story are outdated.

Caldwell, John Cope. Let's Visit Middle Africa. John Day Co. 1958.

--On the former Belgian and Portuguese colonies, and the former British colonies in east and central Africa. The focus is on physical and cultural geography. Emphasizes wild animals and rural life. Reinforces commonly held stereotypes and is outdated.

Caldwell, John C. and Elsie F. Our Neighbors in Africa. John Day Co. 1961.

--Covers topics such as geography, climate, housing, foods, clothing, school, church, history and customs. This book is very simplistic and has many factual errors --Negative about Africans in some aspects. Three countries are named and all other statements as supposedly applicable to all of Africa. There is emphasis on what people lack (radios, etc.). Also outdated.

Caldwell, John Cope. Let's Visit West Africa. John Day Co. 1966.

--On the history, geography and exportable resources of West Africa. Includes speculations on future problems. Lacks depth and is in some ways out of date.

Clements, Frank. Getting to Know Rhodesia, Zambia and Malawi. Coward McCann. 1966.

--A survey of these three counties. At time of publication the author was the mayor of Salisbury, the capital of white-minority dominated Rhodesia, and his writing is extremely biased. Also the contents are highly outdated.

Deming, Angus. Getting to know Algeria. Coward McCann, Inc. 1963.

--An out of date survey of Algeria.

Dickson, Myra. New Nigerians. Rand McNally & Co. 1960.

--Outdated material.

Du Chaillu, Paul. Stories of the Gorilla Country. Harper Brothers. (These stories were written in the 19th century--no publishing date for this edition is given).

--Stories with Central African setting. Very negative about Africans and very stereotypical. The author describes Africans as "tribes of wild men," and "cannibals." Also makes erroneous and negative statements such as that African languages have few words because the people need few--very racist material.

Foreman, Brenda-Lu and Harrison. The Land and People of Nigeria. J.B. Lippincott Co. 1964.

--On the people, history, problems, strengths and weaknesses of the Nigeria of the early 1960's. Reinforces some commonly held stereotypes and is out of date.

Franck, Frederic. My Friend in Africa. The Bobbs Merrill Co. 1960.

--The story of a young boy, in Equatorial Africa. Very racist material. Africans are depicted as evil, lazy and ignorant and the white people in the story are depicted as kind-hearted, sensible and loving and very authoritative in their interactions with Africans.

Gatti, Attilo. Here is the Veld. Charles Scribner's Sons. 1948.

--Describes the author's travels in South Africa. Includes references to South African history and contemporary political problems. Discusses Africans in negative, stereotyped terms. Also outdated.

Gatti, Ellen and Attilo. The New Africa. Charles Scribner's Sons. 1960.

--Depicts Africa as a continent in eruption because of its sudden awakening from a "sleep of ages." This awakening is incomplete, the authors claim, because there are "millions of apathetic African's who will not scratch the ground to grow some food even when they are starving." This is a factual error, among several others and reflects unfounded biases. Describes African societies in stereotyped terms. Also outdated in many respects.

Green, Roger Lancelyn. Ancient Egypt. The John Day Co. 1963.

--Emphasizes a British interpretation of ancient Egypt. Out of date on a number of facts. Distorts ancient history and incorporates a Western cultural bias. The emphasis on mystery and magic detracts from an understanding of the people and their culture.

Guillot, Rene. KPO The Leopard. Oxford University Press. 1955.
Elephant Road. Criterion Books. 1956.
Mokokambo. Criterion Books. 1956.
Tom Toms in Kotokoro. Oxford University Press. 1957.
The Animal Kingdom. Oxford University Press. 1957.
Oworo. Oxford University Press. 1959.
Sirga. Queen of the African Bush. Criterion Books. 1959.
The White Shadow. Oxford University Press. 1959.
Fofana. Criterion Books. 1961.

--All the above novels by Rene Guillot emphasize the wild animals of the rain forest area. They are full of negative stereotyped views of Africa and Africans. The author uses very racist language.

Gunther, John. Meet North Africa. New York. Harper & Brothers. 1957.

--A survey of North Africa. The book is more than 20 years old and is out of date in many ways.

Gunther, John. Meet South Africa. Harper & Brothers. 1958.

--Covers land, history, urban centers, political organization, animals etc. Highly outdated book and subject to strong biases.

Gunther, John. Meet the Congo. Harper & Brothers. 1959.

--A survey of the ex-Congo. Highly outdated including the name of the country given in the title. Also reflects many biases.

Hall-Quest, Olga W. With Stanley in Africa. E.P. Dutton & Co. 1961.

--Reinforces stereotypes with various negative connotations, e.g., we are told that Stanley's goal was to "find Livingston in the wilderness jungle of the dark continent of Africa." Glorifies activities geared towards colonizing Africans. Many errors. Dehumanizes Africans. Gives belittling pictures of Africans and their chiefs. Writes of "greedy chiefs" and "thieving" Africans. One-sided in telling of Stanley's experiences with Africans. The book gives negative images of Africans.

Harman, Humphrey. African Samson. The Viking Press. 1965.

--A novel based on a Luo folktale which is similar to the Biblical story of Samson. The book emphasizes raiding, warfare and rural life. Subject to several inaccuracies and overgeneralizations such as "In Africa history has a habit of coming up as far as the time your father was a boy." Oral history in many parts and written and oral history in other parts go back for many centuries.

Hubbard, Margaret C. Boss Chombale. Thomas T. Crowell Co. 1957.

--The story of an American engineer's family in Northern Rhodesia (Zambia). The engineer's son is the hero of the story. He is called Boss Chombale by the Africans who are depicted primarily as servants. Descriptions of and attitude toward Africans is negative.

Hughes, Langston. The First Book of Africa. Franklin Watts, Inc. 1964.

--A general survey of the continent. Out of date in terms of information given, approach, terminology used, etc.

Joy, Charles, R. Light in the Dark: People of the African Equator. Coward McCann Inc. 1958.

--On the ex-French Equatorial Africa. Focuses on village life, jungles, diseases and evil spirits. Includes unwarranted gneralizations about African life. Reinforces commonly held negative stereotypes.

Joy, Charles R. Island in the Desert: The Challenge of the Nile. Coward McCann, Inc. 1959.

--Deals with the great desert oasis, ancient Egyptians and the Nile, big dams, village life, the revolution of 1952, etc. The book is highly outdated in many ways. More updated materials on Egypt are available.

Joy, Charles R. Desert Caravans. Coward McCann, Inc. 1960.

--Deals with the Sahara desert since ancient times when it was a fertile plain to the late 1950's and the search there for gas, oil, coal, etc. Outdated in terms of the amount of natural resources explored in the area, the economic effects of these resources, information on urbanization, etc.

Kaula, Edna Mason. The Land and People of Tanganyika. J.B. Lippincott. 1963.

--A survey of "Tanganyika." Highly outdated, including the name of the country appearing on the title. This book is full of factual errors and ethnocentric biases.

Kaula, Edna Mason. The Land and People of Ethiopia. J.B. Lippincott. 1965.

--A survey of Ethiopia. The author is writing about a country she does not know much about and understands even less. Much of the information given is outdated, includes a large number of errors and strong ethnocentric biases and misinterpretations.

Kaula, Edna Mason. Leaders of the New Africa. World Publishing Co. 1966.

--On the childhood, youth, education and political role of over fifteen African leaders. Includes information on the social, economic, and political conditions of their countries at the time of publication. Like the other books on Africa and Africans, by this author, this one is subject to a large number of errors and strong ethnocentric biases. Much of the material is also outdated. Negative about Africans. Many blatantly racist statements are found throughout this book.

Kenworthy, Leonard. Profile of Kenya. Doubleday. 1963.

--A survey of Kenya. Much of the material is outdated although at time of publication this must have been one of the better books on Kenya.

Kenworthy, Leonard S. Profile of Nigeria. Doubleday & Co. 1960.

--A survey of Nigeria with emphasis on contemporary life. Although the book must have been one of the better ones on Nigeria at the time of publication, it is now very much out of date.

Lens, Sidney. Africa - Awakening Giant. G.P. Putnam's Sons. 1962.

--Deals with geology, ancient Africa, West African empires, slave trade, explorers, colonization, independence movements, etc. This book is out of date in several ways.

Lobsenz, Norman M. The First Book of Ghana. Franklin Watts, Inc. 1960.

--A survey of Ghana with emphasis on contemporary life. Primarily a picture book of white and black photographs. Out of date in many respects.

Lobsenz, Norman M. The First Book of East Africa. Franklin Watts, Inc. 1964.

--Covers the people, wildlife, languages, prehistory and the future of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. Poorly organized work and describes different societies in stereotyped terms. The discussion of the future stresses the disappointments of independence and the problems of poverty, disease, malnutrition and illiteracy.

Maddock, Reginald. The Last Horizon. Thomas Nelson & Sons, Ltd. 1961.

--This is the story of "Jonny" Strong Arm, a man the author describes as a "Bushman." As a youth of 15 he sees Boers killing his people and taking away their hunting grounds. His family is killed. "Jonny" is determined to take revenge. To learn the weaknesses of the Boers he allowed himself to be a slave to one. The author explains that his owner calls him "Jonny" because "the Bushman reminded him of a baboon with this name." The author tries to sympathize with the plight of the people he keeps calling "Bushmen," but the book contains much that reveals and reinforces racism. The story ends with "Jonny" leading his people in war against the Boers. They get defeated and retreat to the Kalahari.

Manzi, Alberto. White Boy. MacMillan. 1963.

--The story of Isa, a white boy, who was abandoned in the "jungle." He was picked up by a Zulu chief and brought up by a woman to whom this job was assigned. The woman was unloving. The African boys in Isa's neighborhood are depicted as extremely cruel. Their routine of fun is beating, stoning and flogging Isa until he is bleeding, unconscious or has broken bones--and the author says they do all this to him just "because he's

white." The adults are not disturbed by all this cruelty and do nothing about it except saying "... you might have been killed. Tomorrow you'll be all right, if the evil spirits leave you alone." We are also told that the Swazis "always" treated the white boy "like a strange animal." The emphasis of the story is the author's belief that Africans are exceptionally cruel and inhuman. The general message the author gives is that the racist policies of the government in South Africa are not anywhere as bad as what would happen if black Africans were ruling or governing the country. In this story cruelty is the accepted form of human interaction. Isa comes across "bushmen"--small "b"--and we are told that it was the "Bantu race" rather than white settlers who "had driven these little people out of their territory." The "bushmen" are described as "unconquered but a menace." The whole story is made up of the kinds of problems discussed here.

Nevins, Albert J. Away to East Africa. Dodd, Mead & Co. 1959.

--A black and white picture book emphasizing contemporary life and physical and cultural geography. Describes east African people in stereotyped terms. Out of date in many respects.

Niven, C.R. The Land and People of West Africa. The MacMillan Co. 1958.

--A survey of the region. Out of date.

O'Brien, Brian. Ivory, Apes and Jimibel. E.P. Dutton & Co. 1960.

--A story about big game hunting. Set during the colonial period, its American boy hero is called Jimibel by the Africans. All the stereotyped features of African adventure stories are present. Negative about Africans.

Olden, Sam. Getting to Know Nigeria. Coward McCann, Inc. 1960.

--A survey of the country. Out of date.

Paton, Alan. The Land and People of South Africa. J. B. Lippincott. 1964.

--A survey of South Africa: geography, resources, urban centers, national parks, the apartheid policy, etc. Out of date in several ways. Reinforces some American misconceptions and stereotypes about Africans, e.g. "bride-price," "worship of ancestors," etc. Also considering the gravity of the problem created by the apartheid policy, not enough is included on the conditions of the black population in South Africa. A revised edition of this book was published in 1972.

Perkins, Carol and Marlin. I Saw You from Afar. Atheneum. 1965.

--On the way of life of the Khoi San whom the author, like many others, calls "Bushmen." Patronizing and condescending approach. Reinforces the usual American stereotypes about Africans.

Price, Willard. Safari Adventure. The John Day Co. 1966.

--An adventure story about an American traveller and animal collector. Africans are protrayed as servants, porters and cruel poachers. Negative about Africans.

Savage, Katherine. The Story of Africa South of the Sahara. Henry Z. Walck, Inc. 1961.

--A survey of the continent south of the Sahara. Outdated and biased. Racist in some aspects. Mostly the story of Europeans in Africa rather than the story of Africa.

Spencer, William. The Land and People of Morocco. J.B. Lippincott Co. 1965.

--The presentation is as a trip around the country where the reader "sees" (through the author's eyes) the country, customs, places, and interesting sites. Includes history and information on how modern changes are eroding traditional mores and values. The pieces are too disjointed, unless one is already familiar with Morocco. Out of date in some respects. Not always accurate on historical events.

Spencer, William. The Land and People of Tunisia. J.B. Lippincott Co. 1967.

--Major theme is the author's visit to Tunisia where he takes the reader on a descriptive tour, after having given an introduction and a survey of Tunisian history beginning with 2000 B.C. Narrative often lacks clarity. Out of date on several facts. Author presents myths and legends in the guise of history with no word of caution. Several factual errors and biased interpretations.

Sterling, Thomas. Exploration of Africa. American Heritage Publishing Co. 1963.

--Deals with the impressions and explorations of Mungo Park, Livingstone, Stanley, Vasco da Gama, etc. Material is outdated in outlook and type of terminology used. Very one-sided; tells it all from the point of view of these Europeans. Negative about Africans.

Stinetorf, Louise A. Children of Africa. J.B. Lippincott. 1964.

--A story book on several children in different parts of the continent. Where factual information is included the book has many inaccuracies. Strong cultural biases are reflected. Negative about Africans. Africans are depicted as poverty-stricken and superstitious. African hair styles are described as "strange designs." The book reinforces the "jungle" and "nakedness" stereotypes. Africans in the stories are pictured as helpless and all the good things they get come from the "kindly, generous" white people they encounter.

Sutton, Felix. The Illustrated Book about Africa. Grosset and Dunlop. 1966.

--A picture survey of the continent. Inaccurate or biased in numerous places. The book depicts seven societies in stereotyped terms.

Warren, Ruth. The Nile. McGraw-Hill. 1968.

--The river is the theme. The sweep of history is from 3000 B.C. down to the date of publication. Some factual errors. Not well illustrated. There are many line drawings, some of which are almost indistinguishable, all impressionistic. The photographs included reinforce stereotypes. There is only one map and the author begins the book describing the Nile Basin, including Rwanda and Burundi, yet these two countries are not indicated on the map. Later discusses the explorers and many of the places mentioned are not on the map. Culturally biased interpretations and emphasis. Western imperialist biases are revealed in some statements.

Webb, Clifford. A Jungle Picnic. Frederick Warne and Co. (Publishing date not given).

--An imaginary story about two English children who go on a picnic in the forest. Emphasizes animals and reinforces stereotypes about the continent.

Weingarten, Violet. Nile. Lifeline of Egypt. Garrard Publishing Co. 1964.

--Has some general problems of being out of date, although some portions are not affected by this. Other more up to date materials on Egypt are available.

SUPPLEMENT to CHILDREN'S BOOKS ON AFRICA

This supplement to Children's Books on Africa, by Astair Zekiros, May, 1978 provides a list of recommended and non recommended literature using the same fourteen criteria for the evaluation process. Even the books on the recommended list are not entirely without problems, but we feel that their merits outweigh their shortcomings.

Kofi Mensah
January, 1979

RECOMMENDED

Aardema, Verna. JI-NONGO-NONGO MEANS RIDDLES. Four Winds Press, 1978.
A collection of riddles dealing with universal themes and taken from various parts of Africa. The excellent illustrations will also teach about African dress styles, but the fashions do not always correspond with the stated source of the riddle. Primary school level.

Aardema, Verna. WHO'S IN RABBIT'S HOUSE? Dial Press, 1977.
Lively illustrations bring color to a folktale about a caterpillar hiding in a rabbit's house.

Bible, Charles. HAMDAANI. Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1977.
A folktale about ingratitude and its just punishment. Well told and well illustrated. Primary level.

Boase, Wendy. ANCIENT EGYPT. Gloucester Press, 1978.
Since the King Tut Exhibit, ancient Egypt has become a very popular subject. This is a very informative text which is nevertheless easy to read. Discusses Egyptian agriculture, architecture, government and religion. Middle school level.

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Bryan, Ashley. THE ADVENTURES OF AKU. Atheneum, 1976.
An enjoyable folktale about the cat and the dog revealing their true natures in a search for their master's ring. Elementary/middle school level.

Bryan, Ashley. THE DANCING GRANNY. Atheneum, 1977.
African folktale about Anansi, the trickster spider, retold in Afro-American fashion with eloquent illustrations. Elementary/ middle school level.

Carrick, Malcolm. I CAN SQUASH ELEPHANTS. Viking Press, 1978.
Folktale about a caterpillar who takes over a rabbit's home and by giving horrendous accounts of himself, terrifies the animals trying to get him out. The illustrations are the best part of this book. Elementary level.

Cole, Ann (and others). CHILDREN ARE CHILDREN ARE CHILDREN. Little, Brown, and Company, 1978.
A description of the lives and customs of Brazil, Japan, Iran, France, the USSR and Nigeria with suggestions to children on how to carry out projects taken from the different countries. Elementary/ middle school level.

Conaway, Judith. CITY CRAFTS FROM SECRET CITIES. Follett, 1978.
Teaches children to make handicraft from various parts of the world while giving information about the history and culture of the area. Elementary/middle school level.

Domanska, Janina. THE TORTOISE AND THE TREE. Greenwillow, 1978.
Brightly illustrated folktale in which the stupid-looking tortoise outsmarts the other animals. Elementary level.

Gelman, Rita and Joan Richter. PROFESSOR COCONUT AND THE THIEF. Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1977.
Modern story about two boys, black and white, tracking down the culprit of several mysterious thefts at an anthropological site in Kenya. Elementary level.

Gilroy, Tom. IN BIKOLE: EIGHT MODERN STORIES OF LIFE IN A WEST AFRICAN VILLAGE. Knopf, 1978.
A Peace Corps volunteer tells about life in a Senegalese village. Contains a few errors but useful for insight into contemporary rural Africa. Middle/high school level.

Goode, Ruth. PEOPLE OF THE FIRST CITIES. Macmillan, 1977.
A solidly informative book on the ancient cities of Egypt, Mesopotamia, etc. Scarcity of illustration makes it inattractive for children. High school level.

Greenfield, Eloise. AFRICA DREAM. John Day, 1977.
A child's dream of a visit to Africa. A warm story. Elementary level.

Holmes, Burnham. NEFERTITI, THE MYSTERY QUEEN. Raintree, 1977.
Story of one of ancient Egypt's queens told as her autobiography. Very informative historically. Elementary/middle school level.

Hopf, Alice L. BIOGRAPHY OF A GIRAFFE. Putnam's Sons, 1977.
One of the more interesting of the many animal books published in the last couple of years. Elementary level.

Latchem, Colin. LOOKING AT NIGERIA. Adam & Charles Black, 1975.
Though somewhat older than other titles in this supplement, this useful introduction to Africa's most populous nation was not included in our original list.

Musgrove, Margaret. ASHANTI TO ZULU. The Dial Press, 1976.
Splendidly illustrated vignettes on several African peoples. Elementary level.

Perl, Lila. EGYPT, REBIRTH ON THE NILE. William Morris & Co., 1977.
Good survey of Egypt from ancient times to the present, especially good for its understanding of Egypt's present problems. Contains a few inaccuracies, though. High school level.

Prather, Ray. THE OSTRICH GIRL. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1978.
Folktale about an adopted girl who runs away in search of her real parents, but returns in the end to the folks who have brought her up with love. Elementary level.

Reiff, Stephanie Ann. SECRETS OF TUT'S TOMB AND THE PYRAMIDS.
Discusses the building of Egyptian pyramids and the curses that have long been associated with Tutankhamen's tomb and other pyramids. Elementary level.

Schaller, George and Kay. WONDERS OF LIONS. Dodd, Mead & Co., 1977.
An account of the behavior of lions in Serengeti National Park and their ecological relationship with other wildlife. One of the better books on animals. Middle/high school level.

NOT RECOMMENDED

Brown, Walter and Norman Anderson. Famines. Addison-Wesley,1978.
The chapter on Zaire is fraught with inaccuracies and outdated information.

Lawson, Don. Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya. Franklin Watts, 1978.
Among this book's many faults is the tendency to suggest that the history of the area begins with the Roman or Arab occupation, as well as the inability to avoid a cold war bias.

Malatesta, Anne and Roland Friedland. The White Kikuyu. McGraw Hill, 1978.
This interesting children's biography of the famous archaeologist, Louis Leakey, is ruined by the condescending and stereotyped attitude towards Africa.

Newton, Clarke. Southern Africa: The Critical Land. Dodd, Mean & Co., 1978.
This book tries to be fair-minded, but is unable to get away from a cold war perspective and this makes its discussion of the nationalist movements rather unsympathetic.

Sehlein, Miriam. On the Track of the Mystery Animal. Four Winds Press, 1978.
This factual account of the okapi is set in a background of "jungles" and "pygmies."

Anonymous. Old African Tales Told Again. Bob Smith Sound Productions, 1978.
A generally unappealing book which would tend to reinforce rural stereotypes.